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THE
QUESTION CONSIDERED,

WHETHER

W O O L

Should be allowed to be exported, when the price is low
at home, on paying a duty to the Public?

By Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE, Bart. K.

ALSO, AN

A N S W E R

TO

Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE'S

PAMPHLET UPON THE EXPORTATION OF WOOL.

By NATHANIEL FORSTER, D.D.
Chaplain to the Countess Dowager of Northington.

A simple scene! yet *hence* BRITANNIA sees
Her solid grandeur rise *Hence* she commands
Th' exalted stores of every brighter clime:—
—*Hence*, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land. Her dreadful thunder *hence*
Rides o'er the waves sublime.—

THOMPSON.

D U B L I N :

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MDCCLXXXIII.

QUESTION CONSIDERED

S M H T S S W

W O O

21. It is pointed out that when the price is low

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

11. 10. 1944

Я Е В Р И А



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Wool to be used in the manufacture of woolen goods.

U. S. NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Chairman to the Council, Lawyer of, Nottingham

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PROPOSITIONS

THE

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QUESTION CONSIDERED,

*Whether WOOL should be allowed to be
exported, when the Price is low at Home, on
paying a Duty to the Public?*

IF men will think with clearness, and reason with fairness, there are few political questions of more easy discussion than this one. A question may be determined with a tolerable certainty of political prudence, when there are first principles on which the reasoners on both sides can hardly disagree, and facts capable of proof, if they should differ about them.

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I presume few people will dispute the truth of the following

PROPOSITIONS.

I.

That the exportation of raw materials is a gain to a country, in proportion to the quantity of industry employed in producing them, of the shipping employed in exporting them, and of the value got for them in return.

II.

That it is more advantageous to a country, to work up its own raw materials into manufactures, to be consumed at home or exported abroad, than to export them to foreign countries for the use of their manufactures; and, consequently, that a wise nation may prohibit the exportation of its raw materials, to the extent of its ability to work them up at home with advantage.

III.

But, if, from any circumstances, either of war or of peace, a country cannot, at a particular period, find a vent for the manufacture as it used to do, then a continuance of the
pro-

prohibition to export the raw material seems impolitic ; because, if the raw material, which cannot be manufactured at home, be not allowed to be exported abroad, it must be left to perish. But this prohibition will be doubly impolitic, if the material thus left to perish, be of a nature to have cost much money in producing, and be of so great value, that the profit of the farmer, and the rent-roll of the landlord, depend upon it ; and, consequently, the revenue of the state, and the industry of the people, both of which are intimately connected with the greater or less quantity of money in the hands of the farmer and landlord.

IV.

If any doubt should arise, whether there be such a redundancy in the raw material, as disables the manufacturer to work it up with a good prospect of a market, then the infallible test to find out the truth is, to enquire into the state of the price of the raw material. When there is a redundancy, the price will be low ; when there is not, it will be high. Thus the barometer of price will easily and infallibly point out when the raw material should, and when it should not, be allowed to be exported.

V.

If a nation should think of submitting to prohibit the exportation of a raw material, lest it should serve the manufactures of another country; that is to say, should inflict a certain evil upon itself, from the hopes of inflicting a very uncertain evil upon its neighbours; it ought to be very sure that these neighbours cannot be supplied with the raw material elsewhere, either within themselves or from others.

VI.

If the raw material prohibited to be exported, be in great request with other nations, it will be smuggled abroad, notwithstanding the prohibition. If the experience of ages has proved that this cannot be prevented, with respect to Wool at least, it seems, at the first blush of the proposal, more wise to permit it to be exported, on paying a duty to the State, than to be making dally and vain complaints, that it is exported without paying any. But whether the first impression ought, or ought not to be indulged, will deserve the consideration of every landed and every commercial man in the kingdom, of the meanest beggar, as well as of the King and his Parliament.

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If these propositions be true, the following Reasons are submitted to the Public, why Parliament should allow Wool to be exported from Britain, when the price is low, on paying a duty to the Public?

R E A S O N S.

REASON I. The redundancy of Wool is at present so great in Britain, that it is sunk in many places 50 per cent. and in very few places less than 30 per cent. If not allowed to be exported, that superfluity must either perish, or being pressed into a glutted market, must sink still lower the price even of that portion which can be manufactured.

REASON II. Anciently the English paid their chief attention to the fleece of the sheep, because it was the chief object of price. In ancient records, the value of the whole sheep bears no proportion to his wool. At present, in most countries, people pay attention to the carcase alone, because the fleece is no longer the object of price. But if the value of Wool was allowed to be raised, by presenting to it two markets instead of one; that is to say, both the home and foreign, instead of the home alone; the quality of Wool, which like other objects of art and of nature is capable of improvement, would be

be improved. The power of English industry, when not damped by mistaken policies, is beyond that of all nations. The great increase in the length, the weight, and the quality of the fleeces made by the Gentlemen of Lincolnshire, even within these thirty years, shews the extent to which the improvement of English Wool might be carried. Spanish rams are more easily to be transported from Spain into England, than Spanish horses; and yet these last, though prohibited to be exported, find their way from the one country into the other. At some period, and that not a distant one, the Wool of Britain might come to rival the Wool of Spain in its quality. It is a mistake to think that all the Wool of Spain is fine. We are apt to think so, because all the Wool that comes to us from Spain, we see to be fine. But the fact is, that as the King of Spain has a duty of near 18d. upon every pound of Wool exported, none but the very finest is sent abroad, often not more than a small part of the very finest of the fleece. In many parts of Spain they are as attentive to the breed of their sheep, as they are to the chastity of their wives, or as we are to the breed of our race-horses. They carry their sheep from province to province for proper food and climate, according to the different seasons of the year. The code of laws concerning the flocks and fleeces of Spain makes a folio volume; and there

there is a great law officer, with a court of justice, to whom the care of seeing the regulations of that code executed, is intrusted. But in the few parts of Spain, where no attention is paid to the breed, and where the sheep are kept upon the same pasture round the peasants houses all the year, as is done in most parts of Old Castile, the fleeces are as miserable, though in the finest climate of the world, as in the worst hills of Scotland. In ancient times the Wool of England was in as much estimation at European markets as the Wool of Spain. But the Spaniards, by allowing their Wool to be exported, led their people to improve it; while the English, by prohibiting it to be exported, led their people to neglect it. Remove the artificial obstruction, and nature and industry will bring things to their ancient state again. A tax upon the exportation of English Wool, will in one respect, operate exactly in the same manner that a tax upon the exportation of Wool from Spain has operated; for, in order to escape the weight of the tax, merchants will export only the finest kinds of Wool, and the Wool-growers knowing this, will vie with each other who shall produce the finest.

REASON III. The prohibition to export Wool defeats its own object. As it confines the Wool-grower to one market, it sinks the price; sinking the price, it causes a demand from foreign countries, causing a demand from foreign countries, it tempts the smuggler to export; and, by this circle, it is the real cause of that very thing which it is intended to prevent. But this is not all; the man who smuggles one cargo abroad, will smuggle another home; and to decrease his risk, and increase his profit, his new cargo will be of the least bulk, and the highest value he can get; and consequently will, to a degree not very easily estimable, hurt the industry and the revenue of his country. Let it be inquired, from what coasts the greatest quantity of English Wool has been run to France, and to what coasts the greatest quantity of French goods have been run to England, and they will be found to be the same. Is a regulation which under its wings has fostered up a system of smuggling, and strengthened it by the mutual dependance of an exporting and an importing trade, of no consideration to a nation, whose old taxes, when defeated, must be supplied by new ones, upon manufacture, trade, money, and land?

REASON IV. Since then it is impossible to prevent the exportation of our Wool, the dispute seems to resolve into this question, whether it be best to allow the fair trader to export it, on paying a duty to the Public, or to submit to the smuggler exporting it, without paying any? If the exportation be permitted, and the duty consequently levied only when the price is low, the two following consequences will follow:—1st, When there is a redundancy of Wool, more than is manufactured at home, it will be exported, to the profit of the land-holder;—and 2^{dly}, It will produce a large revenue to the profit of the State.

REASON V. Every argument for encouraging the exportation of corn when price is low, applies equally to the exportation of Wool when price is low, with two advantages on the side of the last of these measures. For first, If it be imprudent to supply our enemies with a raw material for their manufacture at an advanced price, it seems more imprudent to supply them with food, the first principle of all manufactures, at a lower price than we eat it ourselves; and secondly, It seems strange that a duty should be refused to be accepted on the exportation of the one, when a bounty is not scrupled to be bestowed on the exportation of the other.

O B J E C T I O N S.

O B J E C T I O N I.

If there be a redundancy of Wool, the natural remedy is to turn pasture land into corn land.

A N S W E R.

If such a remedy was resorted to, a similar redundancy of Corn would be the consequence. It is probable, that that redundancy, by the aid of the bounty on corn, might be exported; but it is not certain that it would; because the exportation will depend upon the state of the foreign markets, which of late times are visibly decreasing in their demands for our corn. The call from abroad for British Wool has been always as regular and steady, as the call for Spanish Wool is from Spain. The call from abroad for corn was, even in former times, irregular and unsteady. In altering the system of our agriculture, therefore, we should only exchange a certain market for the prospect of getting an uncertain one.

This consideration deserves particular attention at this period. Value in Wool can, by means of serews to press it down, be contained in far less tonnage than corn. In
time

time of peace, it should be the object of a nation to export her bulky commodities, because thereby she will be enabled to increase the number of her trading ships. But in time of war, it should be her object to export her less bulky ones, provided they produce the same value; because she will thereby be enabled to increase the number of her ships of war. In time of war, especially, if many maritime nations be our foes, it is impossible to find ships and men sufficient to annoy the enemy, to defend ourselves, and to carry on a trade of bulky commodities all at the same time. Such commodities we must lay our account either not to export at all, or to export in neutral bottoms, which is just so much gain to foreigners, and loss to us. If it was put in the choice of England, whether to export to the value of a million in corn, or of a million in Wool at this time, she would be foolish indeed, circumstanced as she is, to give the preference to the former.

OBJECTION II.

A permission to export Wool, would raise the price of Wool too high; and consequently, would hurt the manufacturing, to serve the landed interest.

A N S W E R I.

Serving the landed, is serving the manufacturing interest. Dr. King and Dr. Davenant, at the close of the last century, computed that the domestic consumption of woollen manufacture, was in proportion of four to one of the foreign consumption; and at present, the proportion must be far greater. It was a saying of the wisest minister that England ever saw, the great Lord Burleigh, "that a fall of a shilling in the stone of Wool, was the loss of a million sterling to England." How many shillings in the stone is it fallen at present? Has the loss of income to the farmer and landlord, occasioned by this fall, no effect upon the extent of the home market for manufacture? Ask the clothier, If he sells as much at home, and gets as ready payment, as he used to do? If the produce of the customs and excises sink from a diminution in the customary expences of the landed interest, will not the deficiency fall in part upon the manufacturer? His private profits, and his exemption from public taxes, depend then equally upon the prosperity of the landholder.

A N S W E R II.

The manufacturing interest cannot be hurt by the proposal. The price of Wool will not be raised upon the manufacturer beyond
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a just medium; because the moment it rises above that medium, the exportation by law, which is proposed to be permitted only when the price of Wool is low, will be stopped.

A N S W E R II.

The manufacturer will be greatly benefited. Wool, finding one vent when another has failed, will be kept constantly at an equal rate in its price, instead of starting sometimes too high, and falling sometimes too low, as it does now; variations which disturb the manufacturer in his projects and exertions, because they sometimes tempt him to overstock the market, and at other times frighten him from even supplying it. This is not all: when Wool-growers are encouraged in the improvement of their fleeces by the prospect of a double market; and still more when exporters, to feel less the weight of the tax, will call most for fleeces of the finest quality, the improvements upon the quality of British Wool may become as extensive and various as the genius and the industry of the people. If, by this means, the English manufacturer should be enabled to make his cloths of English Wool bought for one shilling a pound, instead of Spanish Wool at three shillings a pound, would this saving be no advantage to him?

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The woollen manufacturers of Great Britain must be blind indeed, if they do not see that they have an equal, if not a superior interest with the landlords and farmers, in whatever promotes the improvement of the qualities of a Wool which themselves are chiefly to work up.

OBJECTION III.

A mixture of English Wool is absolutely necessary in the fabrick of foreign woollens; to supply them with Wool, is therefore to promote their manufactures at the expence of our own.

ANSWER I.

Supposing for a moment, that such mixture was absolutely necessary for foreigners, it is equally supplied by smugglers paying no tax, as by the fair trader paying one. It is certain from experience, that the evil of exportation, if it be always one, is without a remedy. But the question still remains, can no good be drawn from it? But a revenue got to the Public is one good from it, when properly regulated; and checking smuggling, is another; nor will the quantity exported under the regulation go beyond what it ought to do. The only time when foreigners buy, is when price is low. The moment that price starts up, they will buy no more for the

the use of their manufactures, and our people will then have all their own Wool for the use of their own manufactures.

A N S W E R II.

It is not true that the manufactures of other countries depend in a very extensive degree upon the Wool of Britain; or, consequently, that the refusing them our Wool makes them depend in an extensive degree upon our woollen manufactures. That they are the better for our Wool, and especially when they get it, as they do now, at a lower price than their own, is certain; but that they cannot do without it is a mistake. The Author of these Considerations passed lately through Portugal, Spain, and France and examined every flock of sheep and magazine of Wool that lay within his reach; and he can with certainty say, that every species of Wool, the long Lincolnshire excepted, is to be found in Spain and Portugal. In Roussillon, are the Wools of Spain. In Languedoc, are the short Wools of the West and South coasts of England, and the long Wools of Lincolnshire, in perfection; and in the other provinces of France, their Wools are as various as the soils and climates of their provinces. A few years ago, the king of Spain paid the compliment to his alliance with Saxony of sending the Elector a present of three hundred sheep. All Europe is in a state of improvement,

provement, more or less, in the arts of life; and nature has poured her gifts on most of the southern and middle European countries, with an almost equal hand. She hath not said to Britain, "Thou alone shalt have Wool" and all other nations shall want it." To prohibit the exportation of Wool, without being very certain that other nations can get it no where else, is therefore a very dangerous policy.

A N S W E R III.

But supposing the fact was, that other nations depended entirely upon Britain for wool for their manufactures, it would be wise in England to preserve that dependance, instead of forcing them to throw it off. This argument applies in a particular manner to France, the only country on earth we have reason to dread. By supplying France with wool in time of peace, we should withdraw the attention of her peasants from the increase and the improvement of their fleeces; and when the hour of war came, we might, by refusing our wool, lock up a great part of her woollen manufactures.

O B J E C T I O N IV.

The woollen manufactures of Spain have been kept down, by the latitude given to the exportation of wool.

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ANSWER.

The contrast between the state of the woollen and silken manufactures of Spain, will afford the best answer to the objection. Spain allows her wool to be exported at all times, whether the price is high or low. She does not allow her silk to be exported, except when the price of it is low. In the one case, her manufacturers are at the mercy of those of all other nations, who can call for the wool of Spain when they please, to the prejudice of the manufacturers of Spain, who thereby lose the foreign market, and are even rivalled in their own. The wool-grower again has, by this means, almost only one market to look to, to wit the foreign one: he is consequently obliged to sell low; and the depression of his income, and consequently of his expence in every article, creates a second diminution of the extent of the home market against the manufacturer. The example of Spain is too melancholy a proof, that the low price of the raw material is not always the cause of a flourishing manufacture: for, although a Spaniard in Spain can buy the fine wools at the rate of two shillings a pound cheaper than an Englishman in England can do, who, besides the original price, pays the Spanish tax, the English duty, and freight, and insurance; and, although the average price of wools in Spain be not sixpence a pound; yet there are few woollen manufactures in that country,

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try, But in the other case, to wit that of the silk in Spain, the foreigner can call for the raw material, only when the lowness of the price shews that there is a redundancy. The consequence of which is, that the landlords, farmers, and manufacturers of the silken provinces of Catalonia and Valencia have more industry and wealth; and that these provinces have more population, than perhaps all the rest of Spain put together.

OBJECTION V.

If a tax be laid on the exportation of wool, it will either continue to be smuggled, to avoid the tax, or it will not be exported at all.

A N S W E R.

If the tax be contrived, as it ought to be, to be no more than equal to the risk and extraordinary expence of smuggling, the smuggler will give over his trade; because he will find it more his interest to pay the tax, than to pay for that risk and that expence. Foreigners will buy as formerly; because it is indifferent to them, whether they pay the addition to the original price, under the name of a duty to the King of England, or of a reward to the smuggler of England. They will chuse to buy rather from the fair trader; because they will find

find it more certain and advantageous to deal with him, than with a smuggler, who, from the nature of his occupation must be irregular, unprincipled, and has no character to lose.

F A C T S

In support of the above REASONS,
and of the above ANSWERS to
OBJECTIONS.

Principles, if just, are always supported by Facts. The truth of the following Facts, in support of the reasonings in the present paper, may be found in the following books:

Mr. Smith, in his *Memoirs of Wool* (one of the most instructive books that was ever written upon trade, because it contains more facts, well vouched, than reasonings), proves from the most authentic authorities.

That before the prohibition to export wool took place in England at the Restoration, and in Scotland at the Union, the average price of wool was far higher in both countries, than it has been since the prohibition.

That the exportation of woollen manufacture from England has not been greater, all circumstances taken into the account, since the prohibition took place, than it was before; and in Scotland has been less.

That since the prohibition took place, the quantity of wool smuggled abroad has been immense.

The public-spirited author of a book lately printed, called *Observations on National Industry*, has, in Letter XXII. collected the authorities to prove, that in ancient times the English wool was in as great request abroad as the Spanish.

Dr. King and Dr. Davenant, at the close of the last century, agreed in computing that one fifth of the land rents of England was paid by wool, and that, that fifth made about one-twentieth of the domestic circulation or expenditure of the nation; on the contraction or extension of which circulation, the depression or exaltation of Britain entirely depends.

From *Mons. Carliers Traite des Betes a Laine*, a work of great labour and authority, it appears that the average price of wool in France is seventeen pence a pound; and it appears from *Le Negoce d' Amsterdam*, a book of good authority, page 86, that the average price of
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of the fine Spanish wool, the only kind that is exported, after the deduction of the Spanish tax, and the expence of bringing it to Holland, is not much lower; whereas the price of English wool, as appears from Mr. Smith's Book, is not above ninepence; from whence this consequence follows, that Parliament may lay on a larger duty on exportation, than government will probably ask, without any risk of raising the price of wool on foreign nations so high, as to stop their demand for it, or tempt them to procure it by smuggling.

CONCLUSION.

It is very likely that interested men will give the alarm to the woollen manufacturers upon this question; inflame their passions, a thing easily to be done with all multitudes, because passion acts by contagion; take advantage of their ignorance, which on speculations of this kind must always be great; and hang out false colours to them. In such a situation, it behoves the Landed Interest to lay shoulder to shoulder in their own and their country's cause, in their application to Parliament. That Interest will, perhaps, upon trial, find that it will be joined by many of the great Woollen Manufacturers of the kingdom, who cannot be ignorant that every project
which

which improves the Wool of England will improve the Woollen Manufacture of England; and who know that, as Britons are entitled to act with freedom, it is one of their chief honours to think with freedom too.

THE END.

CONCLUSION.

It is very likely that interested men will give the signal to the woollen manufacturers upon this occasion, and that their passions, a thing easily to be done with all mankind, because passion acts the contrary, take advantage of their ignorance, which on occasions of this kind must always be great; and hang out false colours to them. In such a situation, it behoves the English Interest to by themselves to shoulder in their own and their country's cause, in their opposition to Parliament. That Interest will perhaps upon trial find that it will be joined by many of the great Woollen Manufacturers of the Kingdom, who cannot be ignorant that every power which

I shall consider the force of Sir John Dalrymple's reasons, in favour of this measure. Which reasons will, in the form of objections, be my arguments against it.

AN

ANSWER, &c.

IN the following answer to Sir John Dalrymple, I shall adopt the method observed in his pamphlet.

I.

I shall lay down a few general principles, which appear to me to be incontestible, and also to apply, in every point, to the present question.

II.

I shall offer some reasons, *against* the allowance of the exportation of wool, in any circumstances, and with whatever qualifications.

III.

III.

I shall consider the force of Sir *John Dalrymple's* reasons, in *favour* of this measure. Which reasons will come, of course, in the form of objections, to my arguments *against* it.

Although general principles are of the greatest use, in the discussion of political questions, it being impossible, either to think clearly, or to reason justly, without them, yet is the utmost caution necessary, in their application to particular cases. As they arise out of a great number of individual facts, and are founded upon some special circumstance, in which they all agree, it requires the most discerning and steady eye, to distinguish this common circumstance, and to extract it, according to Mr. *Hume's* expression, pure and unmixed, from the other superfluous circumstances. For it often happens, that propositions, however just and incontestible, in a general and abstracted view, are found, upon closer examination, and in particular and new applications, to clash with other principles, equally just and general. Conclusions the most fallacious, in reasoning, and errors the most dangerous, in practice, must be the necessary consequence.

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The following general propositions, it is hoped, will not be found chargeable with this defect.

GENERAL PROPOSITIONS.

I.

The prosperity of the *landed* interest, in any country, depends chiefly, if not solely, upon the prosperity of the *manufacturing* interest. Or in other words, The landed interest cannot flourish, where manufactures are in a state of depression and decay. Without a sufficient consumption, neither the produce of lands, nor, consequently, the lands themselves, can acquire their full value. This consumption cannot possibly be obtained, without the employment of hands, in other sorts of labour, than that of agriculture; that is, in the various branches of manufacture, and their dependencies.

II.

Those manufactures are of the greatest advantage to the landed interest, which occasion the largest consumption of the produce of lands: those, consequently, which employ the greatest quantity of labour. To give all possible encouragement therefore to manufactures,

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factures, which come within this description, will be the truest policy. To adopt any measures, that tend to obstruct or depress them, will be the highest degree of political folly.

III.

To secure an ample supply of the raw materials, which form the basis of such manufactures, will be amongst the first objects of public attention: to secure the supply of them, at such a price, as will enable the manufacturer to carry his exertions, in making them up, to the greatest possible extent.

IV.

It will moreover be the policy of every manufacturing country, and more particularly of the owners of land in such country, to secure the most extensive market for its manufactured goods: to secure a foreign, as well as a home, demand for such goods.

V.

By the same principles of policy, such manufacturing country will endeavour, as much as possible, to prevent all foreign nations, from rivalling its manufactures in the market: while, on the contrary, to supply foreign manufacturers with the means of such
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competition, would be a measure of the most pernicious tendency.

VI.

Should any particular country, from circumstances of soil, climate, situation, &c. be in possession of the raw materials of any valuable manufacture, it will be the policy of such country, to preserve, as much as possible, such raw materials, for its own use. And should it happen, that foreigners cannot carry on a rival manufacture, except by a supply of such materials from thence, it will, upon the same principles of policy, use every endeavour, to cut them off from such supply:

VII.

Should foreign countries be possessed of other superior advantages for the carrying on of such manufactures, and want only a supply of the raw materials, to give these advantages their full effect, it will be an act of political insanity, to afford them such supply.

VIII.

Neither the small return, from the export of such unwrought material, nor the small addition of revenue, from a duty, upon such export, can possibly counterbalance the loss of the manufacture itself; nor be made,

in any degree to compensate the many mischiefs, which must arise, as well to the landed, as to the commercial, interest, from such loss.

Upon the ground of these general propositions, I wish to offer the following reasons, why the exportation of wool should not be allowed at any price, and under whatever limitations.

But I would first observe very briefly, because the fact is abundantly known, that the woollen manufacture, in all its numerous branches, requires and employs a greater quantity of labour, than any other manufacture in this country. The number of hands at work in its several stages, and in all its various dependencies, almost mocks calculation. It affords labour, to men and to women, to the young and to the old, to the strong and the weak, the healthy and the infirm, in almost all circumstances, and in all seasons. I would observe also, that this manufacture, in those branches of it particularly which are for the foreign market, is capable of much improvement; that it has been, of late years, in a very improving state; and, unless checked by unnatural obstructions, may be made to produce still more extensive advantages to the public.

REA-

R E A S O N S

Against allowing the

EXPORTATION OF WOOL.

REASON I. If exportation of Wool were allowed, the price would be, at the instant, so much raised, as to be a severe check upon the manufacture; upon those branches particularly, which send their goods to foreign markets. What generally occasions the low price of any commodity? What is, at this time, the principal cause of the low price of our long and coarser wools? The lessened demand for them. And whence arises this diminution of demand? From the diminished demand for the manufactures, in which they are used. The foreign markets for these goods, and it is to these markets they are chiefly sent, are reduced to a mere nothing. Spain has shewn an inveteracy against this country, unknown in any former war*; and refuses admission to British manufactures, of every

* *Odisse quos Leseris.* Never was this maxim more fully verified, than in the present disposition and conduct of Spain, towards this country.

every kind, in every shape, and through whatever channel. The ports of Holland, which, in our former wars with the house of Bourbon, afforded a free passage to the German, and almost every other market, are now shut against us. And even where the markets are, in some degree, open, the difficulties, the charge, and the hazard, of conveyance, are prodigious, and beyond all past example. Our trade, moreover, tho' guarded with an attention, that deserves every acknowledgment, is necessarily exposed to perpetual interruption and peril, from the numerous privateers and ships of war, which are constantly issuing from the ports of the three great powers, in hostile combination against us: while even those of America are, every hour, seen hovering about our coasts. Under these multiplied difficulties of our trade, it would be a miracle, that our manufactures flourished. It is next to a miracle, that those manufactures which depend upon foreign consumption, have any longer, existence; that the woollen manufactures, of this description, labouring, as they do beyond all others, under these difficulties are not totally extinct. But happily this hour of consummate wretchedness is not yet come. Feeling, as they must severely feel, a weight of distress, hitherto unexperienced, they have not yet totally sunk under it. Nothing however is wanting, but the blow now threatened, to complete their ruin. A very small advance
of

of the price of the raw material must put an immediate and total stop to them: while the cause of such advance will cut off all hope of their future recovery. Tempted by the present low price of wool, and, I may add, the lowered price of labour, the manufacturer goes on to the utmost of his ability and credit: in many instances, I fear, at the peril of absolute ruin. He lays up his goods in store for many years: compensated, as he hopes in some measure to be, for the loss of interest upon his dead stock, for the loss upon the stock itself from decay and damage, by the comparatively low expence of raising it. The public mean while is infinitely benefited. The wheel and the shuttle are not absolutely at rest. And numerous families are still enabled to support their themselves, (and, to the credit of the poor be it spoken, there are very few, who do not wish to support themselves,) by their industry, who must otherwise fall an immediate burthen upon the public. Upon that part of the public chiefly, which is now most loudly called upon, "to lay shoulder to shoulder"* in support of this measure—upon the *landed* interest: called upon, therefore, to support a measure, which has the clearest tendency to its own ruin: which must inevitably disable the farmer, from paying his present rents, and, by necessary consequence, sink the rents themselves in future.

future. That such will be the immediate effects of an advance upon wool, the certain, and even the *proposed* effect, of the exportation of it, there can be no reason to doubt. Every source of industry, from this quarter, will be shut up. The manufacture, already in a state of depression and decay, must at once sink and die.

REASON II. The exportation of Wool, will not only check, for a time, the manufactures, in which it is used, but, by enabling foreigners, the French particularly, to rival, and to undersell us, will drive them from us for ever. That the French are desirous of procuring British wool, (more so when cheap, no doubt, than when dear) is a fact, not to be denied. Of this the Legislature have been perfectly satisfied, for upwards of a century past. Otherwise, why such anxious caution, to prevent its exportation? Why such repeated prohibitions, and under the severest penalties? Were the passage to them ever so free, the purchase must be still at their own choice. The bare prohibition therefore of export supposes, at least, a conviction, on the part of the Legislature, of a desire, a want, of the commodity prohibited, from abroad. The smuggler too, gives the fullest and most decisive testimony to this fact, and leaves it beyond a possibility of doubt. Sure, and that from the amplest experience, of an advantageous and
gainful

gainful market, he breaks through every bar, despises every prohibition, and risks every penalty, in the prosecution of his trade. And indeed Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE himself tells us, "that the call from abroad for British wool has been always as regular and steady, as the call for Spanish wool is from Spain" * But whence this regular and steady call for British wool from abroad, unless it were as necessary to foreign manufacture, as the Spanish wool is to the finer manufactures of this country? † This fact would alone be sufficient for our argument. But we know more. We know, that a mixture of British wool is essentially necessary to many branches of the French manufacture, and is of the greatest service in more. We know too, what is still of greater consequence, that it is most necessary, in those manufactures which make by far the greater part of British exports. We export, according to my information, a very inconsiderable quantity of fine cloths. In these articles France can undersell us. Here they want not our wool. If their own growth be insufficient, the flocks of Spain

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* Ib. Page 10. It should have been said *from England*, as answering to the words in the former clause, *from abroad*.

† I have met with many persons, who wish for a prohibition of the importation of Spanish wool. I am of a contrary opinion. Import your raw material whenever, and whence ever, you can, if your own manu-

are at hand for them. But for our coarser cloths, for other baize, and our stuffs of every kind—for some or other of these goods—almost the whole world is our market.—And, as yet, we stand unrivalled in this market. The French have never been able to produce any thing comparable to our Norwich stuffs, or our Essex baize. Nor will they ever be able to equal us, in the gloss and beauty, in the firm and even texture, of these manufactures, unless we are so wise as to supply them with the means. But a very small mixture of the long wools of this country, with those of their own growth, will effectually enable them to do this. It is calculated, that, with one pack of British wool, they can work up, in some branches of their manufacture, three, in others, four packs of their own wool: can work them up into goods of equal quality with those of this country. What then are we

manufactures be thereby improved and extended, (and it will not otherwise be imported) the advantages will be of equal extent. The advantages, to the manufacturer—to those employed by him—to the landowner—and to the people at large.

Upon the same principle (tho' many other subordinate reasons might be mentioned) I approve the importation of Irish yarn. This yarn, tho' in some degree manufactured, may yet be fairly deemed a raw material, in comparison of the finished goods, which the English manufacturer is enabled by its assistance to send to market.

we doing? We are not only supplying our enemies, (our enemies, I mean, in trade) with a raw material, to be worked up by them into a rival manufacture, but we are supplying them with a material, which will enable them to work up into such manufacture five times the quantity of that of their own growth. By sending them one hundred pound's worth of our wool, we enable them to consume four hundred pound's worth of their own. We employ the hands of France, and rob our own hands of employment, in the same proportion. We actually send foreign goods to market, to the certain exclusion of our own goods.

The French, moreover, are, in no other respect, upon an inferior footing to us; and, in many respects, they are in possession of superior advantages. Every implement of manufacture they have, at least, upon equal terms. And indeed we are obliged to them, for many ingenious improvements, in the mechanical parts of the woollen manufacture.

I shall mention two or three very important advantages, of which they are in indisputable possession.

One circumstance, much in favor of the French manufacture, is the comparatively low price of labour. It is not necessary, upon this occasion, to take up a minute enquiry, into the causes of the higher price of labour,

in this country. It is sufficient, that the fact is certain, and is universally acknowledged. Neither do I pretend to ascertain, with precision, the difference in this respect, between the two countries. The proportion of 3 to 2 will not perhaps exceed the truth. But how prodigious will be the effect of this difference, in the price of the manufactured goods? In the Norwich manufactures, the price of the unwrought material amounts to one tenth only; in the Essex, to one fifth, of that of the finished goods. All besides is the price of labour. Now is it possible, that these manufactures can even exist, much less flourish, under such prodigious circumstances of disadvantage. They must droop, they must fall. And by their fall, one hundred and fifty thousand hands (I believe, I speak within compass) will be set at rest: will be thrown an immediate burthen upon the public: will continue to be so, 'till they either transmigrate to other countries, or die, without leaving any successors, in their own. The landed interest, will then too late, see, because they will sorely feel, their mistake. Where will be their market for corn, and for every other produce of their lands? Where will be the employment of their plough-men and other labourers, when the cultivation of lands is checked, as it necessarily must be checked, by the diminished demand for their produce? Where will be the consumption, necessary to throw out that revenue, which
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has been hitherto the sole support of our public funds, and can alone be their future support? But I wish not to aggravate, even in imagination, the dark prospect, which so violent an invasion of one of the most fruitful resources of this country must open, too clearly, to every eye.

The vicinity likewise of the markets is a circumstance, highly favourable to the French manufacturer. Germany is the great market for Norwich goods. Spain and Portugal, with their dependencies, for those of Essex. How much easier the transport to these countries, from France, than from England. Of America I would wish to be silent. But should *independent* America find her account, in purchasing the coarser woollens of France, in preference to those of this country, what must be the fate of the Yorkshire, and many other manufactures. The consumption of British cloth by America has been very great. But every eye must see, that this door will be totally shut against us, the moment her new allies become able to undersell us.

It deserves, lastly, just to be mentioned, that in Spain particularly, the import duties are considerably higher upon British, than upon French manufactures. Whether there be the same disadvantage, on our part, in any other European markets, I do not determine.

But,

But, says Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE, "To prohibit the exportation of wool, without being certain, that other nations can get it no where else, is a very dangerous policy"† We think however, that we are quite sure of this, with respect to the long wools of Lincolnshire, and some other counties. But supposing we did not know this, to a degree of absolute certainty, yet, unless we were quite sure of the contrary, unless we knew what no man does, or even pretends to know, that foreign nations can procure a sufficient supply of such wool from their own growth, it would surely be a most dangerous experiment, to make them an offer of ours. The evil of keeping our wool at home, in whatever circumstances, can be of no consideration, in comparison to that of giving other countries any possible chance of establishing their manufactures upon the ruin of ours.

But it is said, "that in Languedoc, are the short wools of the west and south coasts of England, and the long wools of Lincolnshire, in perfection."‡ I profess not the least judgment in wools. And I suspect too, that the learned Baronet is no great adept in this *science*. From all the information I have been able to procure, I am persuaded, that the fact
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† ib. Page 16.

‡ ib.—15.

is mistaken, with respect to wools of the latter sort. There are no wools, as far as I can learn, of the Lincolnshire kind, in France, any more than in Spain. There is no extent of pasture, in either kingdom, sufficiently rich for the growth of them. In the south of France one should, least of all, expect to find such. Most certain however it is, that the pasture, which produces the short wools of the south and west of England, cannot be made to produce the long wools of Lincolnshire. Even exportation of the sheep would not be found to answer this purpose, for any length of time. The experiment, I believe, has been often tried, and without success. The wools are found to degenerate in a year or two, and dwindle into the same tenuity of texture with those of the countries, into which they are transplanted.* But, at all events, the quantity of this wool, whether grown in Languedoc, or in any other parts of France, must be very inconsiderable, and totally inadequate to the demand. Else, whence the unceasing solicitude of the French manufacturers, to procure the long wool of this country? Who was ever known to seek any commodity from abroad, of which he could have a sufficient

* Similar experiments, as I am informed, have been tried in this country; and with the same success. Lincolnshire sheep have been brought into Essex. But the wool, in the course of a year or two, has become purely Essex wool.

ent supply at home? The men of trade know their own interest better. They never fail to buy at the cheapest, any more than to sell at the dearest market. Now the certain fact is, that foreign manufacturers come to England for wool: whence the certain conclusion is, that they want our wool, and that they cannot procure a substitute for it elsewhere.

But tho' these consequences of a general and free exportation of wool be admitted, it may yet be said, that no such effects will follow, from a merely temporary exportation, and when at a low price. I am however inclined to think, that the consequences would in fact, be still worse. The unknown extent of evil, in the former instance, would be apt to alarm the most interested. And their very selfishness would deter them from risking a measure, so ruinous, at the first glance, to their country, and, in the end, to themselves. But the consequences of a limited exportation are more easily ascertained, and will be risked without scruple, by those, to whom it will be an immediate advantage. Let us then consider for a moment, what will be the probable operation of this measure, under any mode of arrangement, that can be supposed to answer its object. The price of wool will be immediately raised to the exportation standard. At this point it will rest, 'till one of these two things happen: 'till the British warehouses be exhausted, or those of foreign-

foreigners filled. When the stock in hand shall be disposed of, or, at least, such a proportion of it, as the possessors shall think proper, the price will be instantly advanced. The commodity will then be dealt out at discretion: till a second stock be acquired, to flow out again at every port. And should a little management be now and then necessary, to keep things in this regular succession, this ingredient too will be abundantly supplied. The wool-growers, or rather the wool-jobbers are a body, sufficiently compact and united, for this purpose. Without the formality of contracts, or actual combinations, this policy would speak its advantages, to this set of men, in so loud and so clear a language, as to be heard and understood in every corner of the land. And what, mean while, will be the situation of our manufacturers? The advanced price of the raw material, if not during the exportation, yet most certainly in the intervals of its suspension, will amount to little less than the annihilation of the manufacture. The manufacturer abroad will, at the same time, be supplied to the utmost of his wishes. He will find, that wool is not a *perishable commodity*. The English ports will not have been open to him in vain. Being in possession of every thing he wants, he will see them closed again, with perfect tranquility. Every hand, and every head, will be instantly at work. Every market will soon be crowded with his goods. No longer any enquiry after the *British*

Irish Staple. The value, at least, of British goods must sink under such a weight of competition. And with these accumulated circumstances of disadvantage, the high price of material on the one hand, the diminished value of the manufacture on the other, what must be the fate of the latter, but gradual decay at least, if not violent death.

I come now to consider Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE's reasons, for the allowing of the exportation of wool, in the way of objections to the arguments above stated. The examination of these reasons, or objections, which I shall give in the author's own words, will open the whole question to our view, and lead us to a clear and decisive judgment.

OBJECTION I.

"The redundancy of wool is at present so great in Britain, that it is sunk in many places 50 per cent: and in very few places less than 30. If not allowed to be exported, that superfluity must either perish, or, being pressed into a glutted market, must sink still lower the price even of that portion which can be manufactured."§

ANSWER

ANSWER I.

This is not the fact, with respect to all kinds of wool. Of the finer sorts there is no redundancy; and they bear a very high price. We hear no complaints therefore, from this quarter. There is indeed no cause of complaint. Would Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE wish an exportation of these wools? I confess myself unable to collect his opinion from his various statements. At one time he tells us, that the finest wools will be most advantageously exported; and upon this ground wishes ardently the improvement of British wools.* But how is this idea consistent with the very ground-work of his plan, nay, with his own state of the question in consideration, viz. § "Whether wool should be allowed to be exported, when the price is low." Can he suppose, that the price of the short and finer wools will ever be so reduced, as to admit exportation, at the same standard, with those of the long and coarser sort? Or, is the exportation-price to vary, according to the different quality of wools? The truth, I believe, is, that this exportation-system is not perfectly formed, in the learned author's own mind. To his readers it is certainly not quite comprehensible. With respect to the long wools of Lincoln

* Ib. Page 6, 7, 8, and 13.

§ Ib. Page 1.

shire, and some other counties, the fact is not denied. The stock in hand is undoubtedly large, and the price unusually low. This is confessedly a real evil to the grower. But it is not an evil of such oppressive magnitude, as is represented. It is not a greater evil, than every other interest, the manufacturing particularly, at present suffers. It is, we hope too, only a temporary evil. But at all events, and in any view, it is not an evil, that will justify so dangerous, so fatal a remedy, as that proposed.

A N S W E R II.

Wool is not a perishable commodity. It may be preserved, as I am informed, in very good condition, to the end of seven years. The loss upon so much dead stock is doubtless considerable; yet far short of the absolute loss of the commodity.

A N S W E R III.

The present low price is in some measure balanced, by the increased produce. The price of every commodity is governed by two circumstances: the relative quantity brought to market, and the greater or less demand. That the produce of wool is very considerably increased in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and perhaps in every

every other county, where inclosures have taken place, is a fact, I believe, that will not be contested. It must indeed be so, from the very nature of the case: the growth of wool being *cæteris paribus*, in exact proportion, to the richness of the pasture, upon which the sheep is fed. In Northamptonshire, (I have been told this by Gentlemen residing upon the spot) the weight of a fleece, grown in the inclosed parts, (and by much the greater part of that county is now inclosed) exceeds that of a fleece, grown in the open fields, at least in the proportion of three to two. In Leicestershire, the same cause has produced the same effect. In Lincolnshire, the increase of wool is certainly not less: partly from the same cause, the inclosure of the *Wolds*, and partly from the size of the sheep, in the pastures of that county. There is a proverb, respecting the wools of Lincolnshire, which was formerly in the mouth of every consumer; "Wold bred, and marsh fed." The hair of the fleece was of a fine texture, from the light pasture, in which the sheep was bred,* and

* Virgil was well acquainted with the art of raising fine wool.

*Si tibi lanicium curæ, primum aspera silva,
Læpæque tribulique absint; fuge pabula læta;
Continuoque greges willis lege mollibus albos.*

Georgic: Lib. 3.

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and its staple was, at the same time of a great length, from the rich nourishment of the lands,

This passage of Virgil is very descriptive of the fine downs and heaths of this country; the only proper pasture, for the cultivation of wools, of a soft and delicate texture. Of the growth of these wools, I am inclined to think, there is a considerable decrease: owing to the same cause, with that of the increased quantity of the stronger and coarser sort: to the vast increase of the *pabula læta*, of our rich herbage, in consequence of inclosures. The present call for fine, as well as coarse, cloths, is certainly less, than it has been: and yet, the price of the wool, used in the making of the former, is unusually high. Whence can this proceed, but from the lesser quantity, brought to market? Taking, doubtless, into the account the decreased import of Spanish wool.

Here then is an ample field, for the attention and management of the wool-grower; and also abundant encouragement to him. Let him improve the *quality* of his wool, to the very utmost point. Let him, if he can, even rival that of Spain. He will be sure, upon the spot, of a market, and a price.

But how would the allowance of exportation operate, in this way? It would tend to the still greater increase of those wools, the present abundance of which is deemed a grievance; and, by necessary consequence, lessen the growth of those, which we really want. The manufacturer therefore of fine wool, who seems, at present rather reluctant to come forward, must, upon a moment's consideration, clearly see his own interest to be very deeply involved in this question.

lands, to which it was afterwards removed. We now hear no more of this proverb. The wool of the *Wolds*, since the almost universal inclosure of them, is no longer of its usual fineness. The marsh-holders no longer find their account, in drawing their sheep from thence. They therefore in general breed their own sheep. The consequence is, that these animals are of an astonishing magnitude. A large Lincolnshire ram is quite a curiosity. He is a mere mass of Wool: and is ready to sink under the burden of his own covering. The present average weight of a Lincolnshire fleece may be estimated at 12, its former average, at 8 pounds. From this vast increase the market is necessarily glutted, and the price fallen. But if the diminution of price be only in proportion to the increased produce, the seller cannot be a considerable sufferer. And were there a demand, for the whole quantity raised, at this proportionate rate of price, he could hardly be said to suffer at all. But this we allow, is not the case, at present, with respect to wool. It is not pretended, that the holder can, even at the present low price, dispose of his whole stock, or, that his increased growth brings with it a full and adequate compensation, for this loss of value. But we insist, that——

ANSWER

ANSWER IV.

This evil is occasional only, and, we hope, temporary; while every other interest too, in this country, suffers, in a greater or less degree, from the same cause. This cause is the war. Our export of woollens is decreased; the demand for them is lessened; the demand for the wool, consumed in them, is consequently diminished. The same has happened in all former wars. Not perhaps to the same degree; because we have never been engaged in a war of equal extent, and in which foreign ports have been so universally and so effectually barred against us. Evils of this kind therefore, tho' much to be lamented, must be submitted to. And surely the particular distress, of which we now hear such loud complaints, is not amongst the heaviest, with which this country struggles. If the loss of the wool-grower be great, how much greater must be that of the manufacturer. He must, if he go on at all, make up his goods, not for the market, but for his warehouses: at the hazard, not of a partial, but, I may say, of a total loss of his commodity. For it is well known, that the manufactured goods are of a much more perishable nature, than the un-wrought material. With respect to the price also of those few goods, of which he

he is able to steal an export, after deduction of the immense charges of freightage and insurance, he is no better situation than the grower. What too is the condition of the great body of the poor, employed in the several branches of this manufacture? Deploable beyond expression. Some quite destitute of employment, others half-employed, and almost all obliged to fly, (where else can they fly?) to the landed interest, for at least a partial support. But the army, it is said, and the navy are open. To the young and the healthy there is this refuge. So much the worse surely for the families left at home. So much the worse for those, who are bound to support such families. Nor is this distress confined to those towns, which are the seat of these manufactures; tho' here, doubtless, it is most sensibly felt. The villages, within a large circle, are not without their share of this calamity. It is a fact, (I speak it from knowledge) that many parishes, at this instant, pay the carriage of wool, to and from the spinning-houses, at the distance of twenty, thirty, and even forty, miles, for the sake of obtaining some employment for their poor. And are the distresses of a small number of men, in a single county, (for the greater part of the Lincolnshire wool-growers are, as I am informed, in circumstances of affluence) to be mentioned, amidst such universal and multiplied misery? And are they to be relieved, by a remedy, that would fill

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up the measure of national distress, would cut off one of our best resources, and give a fatal blow to the most valuable interests of this country?

OBJECTION II.

† “The allowance of the exportation of wool will be an encouragement to the improvement of it,”§

ANSWER.

To the improvement of it, for what purpose? For exportation. To retrieve its *antient* credit—“its *antient* estimation, at all “the markets of Europe”†—to make it as *formerly*, “the chief object of price”||—to enable, as in *antient* times, tenants to pay their rents, and the king to draw his revenue, from the exportation of wool—from the ex-

† *Ib.* Page 5, 6, 7.

§ I found it impossible to give this objection in the author's own words; because he does not, as in the other instances, state this reason in form; but leaves it to be collected from his representations, throughout the whole section.

† *Ib.* Page 8.

|| *Ib.* Page 6,

portation

portation of a commodity, raised without labour, and incapable, from the very nature of the thing, of producing any considerable return. For it is a fact, that, if the whole annual growth of long wool were exported, it would not give a return, equal to one third of that, from the Norwich exports only. I own when I read the section now before me, I can scarce believe my own eyes. I can with difficulty persuade myself, that the author is in earnest. For is it possible, that a man of Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE's information and discernment, should lose sight of the distinction, between the situation of this country two hundred years ago, and its present situation? Is it possible, that he can seriously wish to bring us back to the old system, of exporting raw produce, and importing the finished manufacture? And are we now to be sent, for information in commercial policy, to the wise sayings of wise statesmen, who lived in an age, when the true principles of commerce were just as well understood, as they are at present, in the island of Otaheite, or among the tribes of the Chicksaws. Were Lord Burleigh now living, would he wish to see the price of wool raised by exportation? The supposition is an insult to his memory. What proportion did the value of lands bear, in his time to their present value? The very same, that the then extent of commerce and manufactures bear to its present extent. Commerce

merce is now the very life-blood of the British empire; and alone distributes nourishment and vigour, through every part and branch of the system. But commerce is, in its turn, fed and supported by manufactures; and by manufactures only. Without exports, there can be no imports. And how trivial the return, from the export of unwrought materials only. Our own country affords the clearest example of this fixed and unalterable course of things. Our land improvements have kept constant pace with our trade; that again with our manufactures. They will all decay and drop together. Let the price of wool be advanced, in consequence of a flourishing manufacture.

This is natural, and as it should be; and affords unquestionable proof, that the system is in vigour. It proves that the price of the manufacture is a full balance to that of the material. Improve your wools, to the very utmost point—for yourselves—for your own consumption, and use. But improve them not for others—for your rivals—for those, who will send them to you again, at a ten-fold price. Either foreigners do want your wools, or they do not. If they do not, the very idea of exportation is folly; if they do, it is insanity. In the one case, the project would be impracticable; in the other ruinous.

But

But "all Europe is in a state of improvement."† So much the better for them—and for us: if we do not suffer them to outstrip us, and if we direct our attention to the proper objects of improvement. So much the better for us:—unless by forcing nature, and misapplying industry, we "bring things to their ancient state again." "If nature has poured out her gifts on most of the southern and middle European countries with an almost equal hand,"‡ this equality of natural advantages arises, not from their uniformity, their sameness, but their variety. From a variety, which enables them to contribute largely to each other's interest and happiness; which alone can enable them to do this; and which is therefore the true and only firm foundation of commercial intercourse. Individuals have each their *staple* of genius and talents: Nations that of growth and produce. Eminence in either case is not to be attained, in opposition to nature. To cultivate the vine and the olive, would be a vain attempt. *vervecum in patria crassoque sub aere*. Equally idle would be the project, of clothing the flocks, which wander over the half-barren hills, and under the sunny atmosphere, of the southern latitudes, with the fleeces of Lincolnshire! If nature hath said to Britain, "Thou shalt stand unrivalled, among the nations around thee, in thy

† ib. Page 15.

‡ ib.—16.

thy woollen manufactures,"† let us not defeat her kind intentions, "by artificial obstructions."‡ Can it be a question, whether it be more *natural* (another word this, in the present instance, for *useful*) for a country, to work up the materials of its own growth, or to send them to other countries, for this purpose.

OBJECTION III.

"The prohibition to export wool defeats its own object. As it confines the wool-grower to one market, it sinks the price; sinking the price it causes a demand from foreign countries; causing a demand from foreign countries, it tempts the smuggler to export."

ANSWER.

We find at length then, that there *is* a demand for our wool, from foreign countries—when it is cheap at least. Now this is the very point of time, at which we should be most solicitous, to keep it from them. Because, by a supply in these circumstances, we shall give them still greater advantages of competition, and enable them more decisively to undersell us. It is not unpleasant to observe, how the different, and even inconsistent, repre-

representations of our author, lead directly to the very reverse of that conclusion, which he labours to establish upon them. At one time, "It is not true, that the manufactures of other countries depend, in a very extensive degree, upon the wool of Britain.—That they are the *better* for it, and especially when they get it, as they do now, at a lower price than their own is certain; but that they cannot do without it is a mistake.† At another time it is insisted, "that if such a mixture was absolutely necessary for foreigners, it will be supplied by smugglers, and that, if exportation be always an evil, it is without remedy."‡ But, upon the former representation, what is the fair and just conclusion? If foreigners want not our wool at all, the very attempt, as has been just observed, to export it, would be ridiculous. If it be of *some* service to them, and their manufactures are *bettered* by it, exactly in the same proportion will the exportation of it be pernicious to our manufactures. "If they will only buy when the price is low,"§—this is the very time when we should use all possible means, to prevent their buying. If, on the other hand, they are really in want of our wool, "and are also equally supplied with it by smuggling as by the fair trader,"|| where in the name of common sense, is the ground

† Ib. Page 15.

‡ Ib. Page 14.

§ Ib. Page 14.

|| Ib. Page 14.

ground of complaint? If foreigners always have been, and now are, supplied, to the utmost of their wishes, through the smuggling channel, of what possible benefit to the wool-grower will be the freest exportation of wool? He has his full market at present; no matter to him, in what manner procured. But if the true state of the fact be, as it most certainly is, that tho' foreigners do at present, by indirect means, obtain by far too large a quantity of the wool of this country, yet are they not able in this way, to procure a supply adequate to their wants, what ought to be the conclusion, on our part? Not surely that we offer them a full and voluntary supply, but that we endeavour to increase the difficulty of their getting any supply at all: that we block up, if possible, every avenue to such supply: that, in a word, we enforce the execution of the present laws, against exportation, or, if necessary, pass more effectual laws.

OBJECTION IV.

“The exportation of wool, when the price is low, will not only be profitable to the landholder, but will produce a large revenue, to the profit of the state.”

ANSWER.

A bait this, which no minister can be supposed to resist, and which will be caught at,
with

with the eagerness of hunger, by an exhausted public.—But if there be any truth in the foregoing observations, this temptation, will, I am confident, be rejected with disdain. Is it possible, that a minister will break up at once a system of commercial policy, built upon the soundest principles of public utility, confirmed by the experience of more than a century, and sanctified as it were, by repeated acts of the legislature, for the sake of a paltry pittance of a revenue? Of a revenue, in any circumstances, scarce worth attending to, but, in the present state of our finances, a mere drop to the ocean. With respect to the present minister, even a doubt upon this point would be calumny. Arduous and painful as his task is, (and no man can wish more ardently than I do, for its alleviation) a little momentary ease must not be so dearly purchased: must not be purchased, at the hazard, at the certainty, of increasing future difficulties a hundred-fold, and involving both the minister and the public in still deeper embarrassment and distress,

If there be any salvation for this country, it must be, by the preservation of its *resources*. That is, by keeping the people in *permanent* ability, to support the burthens laid upon them. Every tax will indeed, in some degree, affect either lands, or trade, or as is generally the case, both. But there is a wide difference, between laying an additional burthen upon

mens shoulders, and disabling them from bearing any burthen at all. A tree may be wounded in its branches, without hazard of its life, or vigour, but a blow at the root will be mortal, and at once decisive of its fate. The measure proposed has this direct aim. It strikes at the original sources of all national ability, and, consequently of all revenue—at industry—at population—at that consumption, therefore, as well of foreign, as of home, produce, whence a revenue can alone arise.

With these impressions, I trouble not myself to consider, what would be the probable amount of this duty. Under the proposed mode of regulation, as it would be liable to perpetual interruption, it could be made to contribute, upon fair estimate, very inconsiderably, towards a new fund, for a new loan. But indeed were this exportation-scheme to be adopted, I confess, I should rather wish to see it take place, without any limitation at all, whether of price, or of duty. The evil would in this case meet us at once, with its full force, and would itself, as it were, compel us to immediate resistance. Whereas under regulations and checks, of whatever kind, the danger would shew itself more gradually; its approaches, tho' not less sure, would be less rapid; and, I need not add, that, in the case of a duty, the mischief would not be quite so easily removed.

O B-

OBJECTION V.

“ Every argument for the exportation of corn when price is low applies equally to the exportation of wool when price is low.”

A N S W E R.

This is indeed surprizing. For surely no two cases were ever more dissimilar, in every circumstance. Corn is, to all purposes of exportation, a manufacture, a finished manufacture—Wool, a raw produce. To the raising of corn, much labour is required—To the growing of wool, scarce any. The return for corn, consequently, affords to thousands the means of subsistence, over and above the rent to the land-owner, and the profit to the farmer—The return for wool amounts to little more, than such rent, and such profit. By exportation of corn, we provide food for other countries, at *their* cost—By exportation of wool, foreign nations are enabled to provide clothes for themselves and others, at *our* cost. By the exportation of corn, we ensure domestic industry of the most useful kind—By the exportation of wool, we destroy the very means of industry. Lastly, by the exportation of corn, we increase its growth for the home consumption, and, at the same time,

(taking

(taking into account the regulations of the import-trade) diminish its home price upon the whole——By the exportation of wool, we increase its growth, for foreign consumption, with a certainty, nay, with a view, of raising its price, at home. So pointed is the opposition between these two cases, one of which is here held out to us, as a rule for the other.

The parallel, indeed, between the exportation of corn, and that of a finished manufacture, is sufficiently exact. And the same arguments may be applied, with nearly equal force to both cases. The very same encouragements too might in similar circumstances be as usefully employed, in the one instance, as in the other. A sum of public money could not be better expended, than in giving a bounty upon exported woollens, should foreigners, by any untoward events on our part, be enabled to undersell us.

Besides these five reasons, which are brought forward in form, and which I have considered in the way of objections to the present system of the wool-trade, there is a farther argument, addressed to the manufacturers themselves, which must not pass off, without some examination.

“The manufacturing interest will not only not be hurt, but will be greatly benefited by the proposal. It will not be hurt, because the
moment

moment the price rises beyond a just medium, the exportation will be stopped." "It will be greatly benefited, because wool, by this double market, will be kept constantly at an equal rate in its price, instead of starting sometimes too high, and falling sometimes too low, as it does now; variations, which disturb the manufacturer in his projects and exertions."

What this medium price is to be, is not however yet fixed. But supposing this point settled: is it so very clear a matter, that when exportation is stopped, the price will also stop with it? Is it not rather to be expected, is it not indeed certain, that the price will be instantly advanced, and that to whatever pitch the holder of wool shall think proper? Will not the manufacturer be always at his mercy? Unless the price could not rise beyond the medium rate. But the fact is, that this variation of the price of wool, used in exported manufactures, is one of the greatest benefit, both to the manufacturer, and to the public. The low price, when the demand is checked, will enable him, to keep many of his looms at work, which must otherwise have been idle. An advance of price, on the other hand, when the sales are brisk, will hardly be felt.

But the manufacturer, it is urged, will be benefited, still in another way. The domestic consumption of his goods will be increased,

creased. "Ask the clothier if he sells as much at home, and gets as ready payment, as he used to do." But surely this is the very first instance, in which an attempt has been made, to cure a disease, by increasing its cause. To what is owing the present diminution of the home consumption? It is ultimately owing to the diminished demand for our manufactures, of whatever kind, from abroad: to the loss of trade, in consequence of such diminution: to the loss of industry, in consequence of both. Hence the general inability to purchase, as well the produce of the farmer, as the goods of the tradesman: and all the distressing consequences of such inability, both to the landed interest, and the mercantile. For it is absurdity to suppose, that either of these interests can flourish at the expence of the other. It is infatuation, it is blindness itself, not to see, that the distinct distresses of each must create additional distresses to the other. And are these calamities to be removed or lessened, by giving a still more extensive operation to the causes of them? Hundreds of thousands will at the same time be rendered incapable not only of purchasing covering, but sustenance.

I now hasten to a conclusion: tho' I pretend not to have exhausted the subject. Many considerations, which occurred to me in the course of this enquiry, I have been obliged

obliged to suppress. Many more must have doubtless occurred to others.

I have directed my appeal chiefly to the landed interest: because I consider that interest, as the great central object of every political arrangement. I estimate the value of every other interest, by its relation to the landed. But this interest cannot support itself. It can alone be raised, and stand, upon the broad and solid basis, of industry, and manufactures. This is a truth founded in the very nature of things; confirmed by the unvaried experience of this country, and of almost every other nation under Heaven.

“The fleece, the fail, and the plough.” Such is the fixed and unalterable order of nature. “Manufactures, commerce, agriculture.” These are the three grand sources of British wealth and prosperity. They impart to each other mutual strength, and support. Neither of them can exist, independently of the rest.

“Nature hath joined them together, man will in vain attempt to put them asunder.”

T H E E N D.